

Derrylyn Gorski
First Selectman
Town of Bethany
Public Hearing Testimony
Before the Public Safety Committee
March 4, 2014

HB-5391 - AN ACT CONCERNING OVERTIME AND FRINGE BENEFITS OF RESIDENT STATE TROOPERS

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments in support of HB-5391, which would assist towns in maintaining critical public safety services.

By capping the amount that towns have to reimburse the state for Resident State Trooper overtime and fringe benefit costs at 70%, this bill will help us maintain a program that has enhanced public safety in our community.

We understand that towns should share responsibility for costs associated with this program. However, the costs have become unmanageable due to significant increases in fringe benefit rates. Although we try to budget for some increases in the cost of this program, this big hike in fringe benefit rates was unexpected.

It is unclear how the state calculates this increase and appears to put the burden on towns for costs that should be borne statewide. For example, the fringe benefit rate includes a percentage increase attributable to pension costs for the entire state police department. This does not seem equitable.

The Town of Bethany values the Resident State Trooper program, which has been instrumental in protecting the public safety of our community. However, the state should recognize that it a partner in providing public safety and work with towns to control costs associated with the program.

I urge your support for HB-5391 and thank you for raising this important bill for a public hearing.